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## THE FRIENDS AND FOES OF EUGENICS.

ONE of the surest signs that a new movement is making headway is its having begun to arouse opposition. And such opposition, instead of being deprecated by the supporters of the movement, should be welcomed by them. They should remember that critics will not trouble themselves to combat opinions that are not "live coals," just as no respectable terrier will worry a dead rat. The early converts to Christianity were not persecuted until they were thought to be a public danger. When persecution at length set in, it only served to spread the teaching it was designed to repress. "Thus," as was said long ago, "the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church."

The Eugenic movement has now reached the stage when it, in its turn, has to face active opposition. Against it false accusations are being brought, of which a single example must suffice. Quite recently a well-known writer spoke of Eugenics in slanderous terms, which I do not reproduce here since to do so would give them wider currency. To these slanders he appended an argument, futile and far-fetched. Here it is. One of his grandfathers was, he tells us, "a patient man of science who spent his life in observing and recording the habits of fish without attempting to teach the Almighty how to improve them." This grandfather was also the author of *A History of the Fishes of the British Islands*, wherein is "a chapter on salmon in which he permitted himself an indignant paragraph upon men who intrude such (*sic*) barriers upon Nature." To "intrude barriers" is new, to "intrude *such* barriers" is cryptic, unless we know what sort of barrier is meant. Every breakwater is a "barrier upon Nature," so is every chimney-cowl; the one checks the advance of the tide on the shore, the other the downward draught of air into the house. Did breakwaters and chimney-cowls rouse the indignation of this "patient" ichthyologist, and, if not, where did he draw the line between the lawful and the unlawful, between the sacred and the profane?

This same writer went on to say of his grandfather that "as to the claims of the Eugenists he would have quoted the great smashing answer in Esdras":

"And He (the most High) said unto me, In the beginning when the earth was made, before the borders of the world stood or even the winds blew, before it thundered and lightened, or even the foundations of paradise were laid, before the fair flowers were seen or even the movable powers were

established, before the immeasurable multitude of angels were gathered together or even the heights of the air were lifted up, before the measures of the firmament were named or even the chimneys in Sion were hot, and ere the present years were sought out, or even the inventions of them that now sin were turned (*sic*) before they were sealed that have gathered faith for a treasure, then did I consider these things, and they all were made through me alone and through none other; by me also they shall be ended, and by none other."

If the dead man into whose mouth this passage from the Apocrypha is put would have made use of it in the way suggested, one would have liked to know still more about him. One would also have liked to know more about the writer's other ancestors, direct and collateral, for a careful study of the family traits might account for, possibly even excuse, the unworthy attack against which, at the outset of this paper, I have felt bound to protest.

Leaving this surface bubble, I proceed to deal with weightier matters, and to inquire what is the attitude towards Eugenics of three very different classes of persons, viz., (1) the Socialists, who would annihilate capital by seizing all land and all instruments of production; (2) the "man in the street," who is against State interference of any sort, and thinks he can solve social problems by his own common sense; (3) spiritually minded persons who, conscious of the existence of a Higher Power, trust to Him for personal guidance, and are disposed to look askance at Science and all her works.

The Socialists do not conceal their hostility to Eugenics, or the footing on which that hostility rests. Believing, as they do, that all men should and might be made equal in respect both of status and means, they see in the theory of heredity a most embarrassing factor. Accordingly, they assign to it a back seat, and would, if they could, get rid of it altogether. For the regeneration of mankind they rely exclusively on "improved surroundings." Wrote recently one who, if not a professed Socialist, is obviously in warm sympathy with Socialism: "Give the industrial community houses worth living in, work worth executing, adequate remuneration, appreciable leisure, enjoyable recreation, and reliable employment, and the habitual drunkard, the criminal, the tramp, and the feeble-minded will become as extinct as the dodo." How delightfully simple this sounds, and how impossible it is! What complete ignorance of human nature, its temptations and weaknesses it shows! "Work worth executing." But if there is to be no struggle for life, no incentive to exertion, who is going to make and repair our drains, stoke our ship-fires, or open up and unload our mines? "Appreciable leisure and enjoyable recreation." Is it not the fact that to many persons "leisure" simply spells

"listlessness"; and that not a few find in brutalising forms of sport their keenest recreation? Much depends on innate character, which varies greatly, not only as between strangers in blood, but as between members of the same family. This latter fact every observant mother knows, although never, perhaps, having heard of the laws of heredity she does not know the reason for it. Much, too, depends on the opportunities afforded for developing innate character, but opportunity alone is not enough. You cannot gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. You must first change the nature of the plant or tree, and this you cannot do by merely "improving its surroundings."

It is sometimes objected against Eugenics (not by Socialists only) that to aim at improving the stock is to "play Providence to man." The answer is that the entire course of civilisation may with as much truth be so described. Besides, the objection is now out of date and outworn. Let me give the illustration of Benjamin Franklin. It is recorded that when crossing the ocean in a terrific storm a flash of lightning suddenly discovered to him the close proximity of another ship just in time to avoid a collision. This flash, although he knew more about its cause than any of his contemporaries, made a tremendous impression on him. He regarded it as "providential," *i.e.*, as a special interference of the Deity in his favour. This happened about the middle of the eighteenth century. At the present day, ocean-going vessels are, as everyone knows, equipped with the Marconi apparatus, and when pursuing the same sea route can be in communication with each other during the entire voyage. Wireless messages pass and repass, but no one regards these as "providential." Rather are they looked on as only a fresh example of the wild forces of nature harnessed and driven by man.

Consider also the general bearing towards the disastrous weather experienced during the disappointing summer of this year. Continued rain, at a season when crops should be ripening for harvest, would formerly have been interpreted as a sign of Divine displeasure, to be appeased only by setting apart a day of public humiliation. Yet no suggestion of appointing such a day was, I believe, made in any quarter. Even the less potent charm of the "prayer for fine weather" was not generally resorted to. Further, more than one of our newspapers apostrophised the month of August in fierce *journallese* as if that luckless cycle of time had been a personal enemy, inflicting for its own pleasure damage on the agriculturists and dismay on the holiday-makers. Yet no one pronounced these tirades to be impious, nor was anyone a penny the worse for them. What does all this show? Does it show that

we are becoming more irreligious, more given over to materialism? Nothing of the kind. All it shows is this—that the “sphere of influence” of Particular, or Special, Providences steadily contracts as Science expands, its place being taken by the loftier and more abstract conception of the unity and majesty of Nature as a Whole. This conception leads us onward and upward to the correlative conception of an “Universal Providence” with whom we are privileged to co-operate in this sense that whilst He wills the end, we search out and apply the means. Acting on this inspiring idea of co-operation with a Divine Power, Eugenic inquirers “search out” the best methods of race-improvement—and strive to create an enlightened public opinion which shall “apply” the results they obtain.

It is further charged against Eugenics that it favours “breeding for points” in man, just as pigs and poultry are “bred for points.” This charge is groundless. Where in authorised Eugenic literature is any such statement to be found? True, Francis Galton, the founder of Eugenics, set up a standard of “civic worth” as a thing to be aimed at. But he never supposed it could be “bred for,” *i.e.*, born ready made, as Athené, according to Greek mythology, sprung fully armed from the head of Zeus. Besides, “civic worth” is not a point, it embraces an entire character. With equal reason might it be averred that because Christianity inculcates the practice of several virtues making up a complete whole, it is a “religion of points.”

Before parting with the Socialists, I sum up by affirming that their hostility to Eugenics is traceable to two sources. First, they refuse—although repeatedly reminded of the fact—to recognise that it lays great stress on environment, whilst holding that in the composition of humanity heredity is the more powerful factor. Secondly, in their zeal for drastic economic reforms Socialists turn a deaf ear to all biological teaching, although biology throws a flood of light both on man’s past and on his future.

(2) The “man in the street” (otherwise the “plain man”) is appealed to on occasion by both political parties. Having no definite opinions of his own, he may be described as the residuary legatee of such opinions of other men as are too loose to be specifically stated. He is now being informed that the Government Bill for the control of the feeble-minded is a gross infringement of the liberty of the subject. He is told that a new word, “segregation,” has been imported into the English language to disguise a new form of punishment. And for what? Because, forsooth, the feeble-minded are so unfortunate as not to be able, in this world of storm and stress, to cope with their fellows—a misfortune which is not due to any fault of theirs. He is told

further that restriction is sought to be put, by public opinion, perhaps by legislation, upon certain undesirable marriages. This shocks him inexpressibly. "Let every man," he resentfully cries, "be free to choose his own mate and to have as many children as he pleases. The more the better, for then he will be increasing the population and obeying the scriptural injunction to multiply and replenish the earth."

Time was when this line of argument would have carried all before it. It is now, however, beginning to be generally acknowledged that the sentiment on which it is based is only concerned with Self, and ignores what is due to the community. It also ignores a very grave social evil about which there is a conspiracy of silence. Does the "plain man" realise that prostitution is largely recruited from the ranks of the feeble-minded (often the offspring of feeble-minded parents), and that on prostitution waits a virulent disease which saps the manhood, and not seldom the womanhood, of the dwellers in our crowded cities and towns? Does he know that out of a population for England and Wales of over thirty-two millions nearly 150,000 (without reckoning certified lunatics) have been reported by a Royal Commission to be mentally deficient, that of these about one-half were in urgent need of assistance and care? Does he know that "segregation" in an institution or colony, far from being a punishment, is the best thing for the health and well-being of the inmates, and also the best mode of utilising economically such capacities as they have, rendering them in part self-supporting? Witness the excellent school at Sandlebridge in Cheshire founded by Miss Dendy, the School at Waverley, and allied colony at Templeton, in Massachusetts, U.S.A. Witness also the Catholic colony at Ursberg in Bavaria, of which the following description (from a Catholic source) may be taken as correct:—

"The patients consist of 284 idiots, 659 mentally deficient, 151 epileptics, 107 deaf and dumb, 99 cripples, 125 blind, 64 sick people. These are controlled by a staff consisting of 405 Sisters of the Order of St. Joseph, 148 postulants, 63 pupil teachers, 16 priests, 12 lay brothers, 10 voluntary workers, and the doctor. The occupation is chiefly farming, but there is also a brick and tile works, a quarry, a sawmill, a brewery, a windmill, a printing press, a village inn, and a guest-house. The feeble-minded are divided into grades on the most scientific principles. It is of the utmost importance that a patient should associate only with his intellectual equals, amongst superiors he becomes depressed and eager to exert himself. The mere threat to send the inmates away is sufficient to bring them to order. They are all happy. Some earn pocket money. They like to remain because they have far more comfort here than anywhere else. The eugenic aim is achieved; they do not propagate their kind nor are they themselves changed into anti-social units. On the contrary, the civilisation is so high that no police are needed."

When the "plain man" reads, marks, and inwardly digests this account, surely his "common sense" will show him that in this matter of the feeble-minded he is being greatly misled?

(3) A few years ago it might have been said that the most serious obstacle to the progress of Eugenics was the attitude towards it of our ministers of religion. But they, too, are coming round. Even the Roman Catholic priests have lately sounded a sympathetic note; although, of course, they find much in Eugenics of which they cannot approve. Cordial allies they cannot be, so long as they continue to promulgate tenets of dogmatic theology, which, having served their turn in the past, are now only interesting relics of atavism. This may be thought strong language. Let me proceed to justify it.

The "Catholic Social Guild" has lately put out a Manual entitled *The Church and Eugenics*, the author of which is the Rev. F. T. Gerrard, the President of the Guild being Monsignor Parkinson, of Oscott College, Birmingham. In it we are told—and I rejoiced to read the statement—that "Catholicism, so far from seeking to hinder eugenic reform, seeks rather to promote it by setting it on a lasting basis, the basis of the spirit." But on this there immediately follows: "God is taken as the beginning and end of all racial improvement. He improves the race and *He improves it for the manifestation of his own glory*. We co-operate with Him" (the italics are mine). Dr. Gerrard is also the author of a book on *Marriage and Priesthood*, which sets forth the Catholic ideal of both. It proclaims the origin of man in a couple of sentences, "*God, although supremely happy in the company of his own blessed Trinity*, willed to exercise His love outside Himself. He willed to produce a created world, in which there should be a class of creatures bearing His own likeness." (The italics again mine.) The origin of woman is given with equal brevity. "God cast Adam into a deep sleep, took a rib from his side, from which he built a woman." And then we are told that these momentous "facts" had "a much wider significance than the mere multiplication of human beings and the replenishment of the earth"—that "as Eve was taken from the side of Adam as he slept, and became the mother of all living, so was the Church taken from the side of Christ *as He slept upon the Cross*, and became for Him His chosen spouse, the Mother of all those to whom He had come to give life."

Can any man of education accept this as true doctrine? Observe, the Church of England does not go this length. She ordains, indeed, that the first chapter of Genesis, from which the above account is in part borrowed, shall be read in the Churches twice a year, but she leaves her ministers free to explain that

the story of Adam and Eve is not historical fact, but tradition current amongst earnest seekers after God before physical science had dawned upon mankind.

The attitude which the clergy of the Church of England might well assume towards Eugenics has been defined with equal courage and discretion by Archdeacon Peile in the *Eugenics Review* for October, 1909. After pointing out "the natural reluctance of the clergy to entertain the idea of a science which involves the application of the methods of exact study to conditions which they have hitherto been taught to leave in a twilight of mystery," the Archdeacon suggests that the most effective weapon for overcoming this reluctance is the "same which must be employed for all new causes, namely, the education of public opinion." "Patient effort," he says, "should be made to get people to understand that these subjects *must* be approached for the sake of humanity and civilisation, and that they *can* be approached frankly and sensibly without danger to morals and good sense." "The clergy," he adds, "are, after all, human beings; that is, they are to a great extent the creatures and servants of their environment. . . . It is by the general enlightenment and conciliation of the intellectual class to which they belong, that they can best be enabled to take on this subject a definite line, which would probably be neither safe nor expedient until the ground is prepared by the gradual spread of information." Some persons may deem this over-cautious; it is, at all events, the attitude of a man who is a friend, not a foe. I may add that the Archdeacon has already by his paper (now separately published) won over to his way of thinking many of his clerical colleagues.

Spiritually-minded people often make the double mistake (1) of supposing that religion and science are antagonistic to each other; (2) of "fighting shy" of Eugenics because it has a separate, scientific side. Yet it is easier to be (like General Booth) religious without being scientific, than to be (like Haeckel) scientific without being religious. The more we learn of the universe, the more we discover there remains to be learnt; the more we try to fathom the mysteries of matter, the more "immaterial" matter turns out to be. Moreover, there are chords in human nature which no scientific lecturer can set vibrating. The chord of willing self-sacrifice is one of them. Now, Eugenics inculcates such self-sacrifice and extends its beneficence beyond our immediate circle to the whole of humanity, including generations to come. Hence, whilst it is for rendering help to all who suffer from racial poisons, whether by their own fault or not, it holds that the sufferers ought not to be allowed selfishly to lay their burden on their posterity, whose lives may thereby be embittered

and handicapped from the start. In Eugenics, Pity and Prevention tread the same path; Prevention leading. It follows that the reproach sometimes levelled against its disciples of favouring a "lethal chamber" should be consigned to the limbo of exploded myths, along with "breeding to points in man," and "the selection of partners in marriage by the State" regardless of natural instincts and prepossessions.

So far had I written when there appeared Professor Schäfer's presidential address to the British Association at Dundee. To many it was probably a startling novelty. To those who had acquainted themselves from time to time with the researches of Sir W. Crookes, Sir O. Lodge, Sir J. J. Thomson, and others, the hypothesis of the continuity of the inorganic and the organic worlds was no surprise at all. To Dr. Charlton Bastian, who has, by experiments in hermetically sealed flasks and otherwise, devoted long years of inquiry into such continuity, the hypothesis had long seemed a certainty. Let us suppose it to be a certainty. Let us suppose that the chemists succeed in giving apparent life to certain combinations of inorganic elements, such as the known constituents of protoplasm, would they not leave the mystery of life still to be solved? Would they not merely have added another mystery, *viz.*, how is it that inorganic matter combining in certain proportions expands and contracts, and even (so to say) "fructifies" reproductively?

Professor Schäfer was careful to explain that the life of which he spoke was not the whole of "life," but only a part of it. "The problems of life," to quote his exact words, "are essentially problems of matter, you cannot conceive of life in the scientific sense as existing apart from matter." He then went on to state distinctly that he had been dealing with this scientific life, and not with the life of "the soul." The "animula, vagula, blandula" (the reality of which he did not question) was entirely outside his province.

Nor did he attempt to tell us anything of the origin of those exalted emotional feelings which are comprehended in the term "spiritual love"—love, that is, detached from sexual passion, yet truer and more constant than any sexual passion can be. Such love may be felt and shown by one human being to another, and also to the race to which both belong. It may enter into that Eugenic ideal of "civic worth" which Galton urged us to aim at, lifting it to a higher plane and imparting to it a supernatural grace.

A great preacher who is still amongst us, although his voice is no longer heard in public, once said: "We must surrender

personal inclinations and live with the thought of the happiness and good of the coming humanity as one of our first motives; but the good of the race is not our only motive for life; it must be coincident with careful development for the sake of our everlasting connection with God, and its end is union with perfect

te." This is the message of Eugenics proclaimed unconsciously by an outsider. Happy are they who are able to accept and realise it, for it will soothe them in their mental troubles and replace their declining years.

Spiritual love, as above interpreted, is one attribute—or ought one to say a function?—of the soul, and since the soul is "beyond matter," and bodily death is but the dissolution of matter, may not even those who cling to natural, rather than to revealed, religion cherish "a sure and certain hope" that the power of exercising such love as this will be unaffected by death?

MONTAGUE CRACKANTHORPE.